

illness or by injuries inflicted upon them. All of them endured the immeasurable pain of separation from loved ones.

Nevertheless, our prisoners of war held firm in their belief in the promise of America and the freedom and justice to which this Nation is dedicated. They struggled to stay alive and to return home, and, by the grace of God, many of them did.

Today, we honor our former prisoners of war and give thanks for the peace and liberty they so valiantly defended. Each of them has shown us that faith and courage are freedom's invincible shield and sword. We must never forget the sacrifices they made for us, nor must we allow our children to forget the lasting debt we owe to each of them. Therefore, we should also renew our commitment to securing the release of any U.S. serviceman who may still be held against his will.

As a measure of our admiration and gratitude for all former prisoners of war, the Congress, by Senate Joint Resolution 190, has designated April 9, 1990, as "National Former Prisoners of War Recognition Day" and has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this occasion.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE BUSH, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim April 9, 1990, as National Former Prisoners of War Recognition Day. I call upon government officials, private organizations, and individual Americans to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities to honor former prisoners of war and to renew our Nation's appreciation for the rights and freedom they defended.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this sixth day of April, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and fourteenth.

GEORGE BUSH

Proclamation 6114 of April 6, 1990

Pan American Day and Pan American Week, 1990

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

This is a momentous time in the history of the Americas, and it is a promising time in inter-American relations. Throughout the Western Hemisphere, the ideals of freedom and representative democracy have triumphed, while tyranny has been in full retreat. Democracy, the exception just one decade ago, is today the rule. A majority of the nations in this hemisphere have freely elected governments, and prospects for democracy, peace, and economic development throughout the Americas appear bright.

Much of this progress has been made possible by the work of the Organization of American States and its predecessors, the Pan American Union and the International Union of American Republics, formed in 1890. Each year, Pan American Day and Pan American Week provide

an occasion to reaffirm the beliefs and aspirations that inspired the founding of these organizations.

The people of the Americas are united by much more than geographic proximity. From the earliest days of the inter-American system, we have been drawn together by certain ideals. Those ideals are rooted in respect for human rights, and they are clearly expressed in the Charter of the Organization of American States, which declares that the "historic mission of America is to offer to man a land of liberty." The creation of the inter-American system a century ago signalled our commitment to promoting freedom, opportunity, and political and economic stability throughout the Americas.

The OAS Charter also states that "the true significance of American solidarity and good neighborliness can only mean the consolidation on this continent . . . of a system of individual liberty and social justice based on respect for the essential rights of man." After 100 years of partnership, we know that the proudest days of the inter-American community have been those when it has faithfully upheld these ideals and set a universal standard for the protection of liberty and democracy. The United States is therefore determined to help ensure that the inter-American system remains a formidable opponent of totalitarianism and an effective advocate of representative government in the region. We also recognize the vital role it can and must play in eliminating illicit drug-trafficking, which has posed a threat to the freedom and safety of millions of men and women.

Today, poised at the threshold of the 21st century, the nations of the New World face a world of new challenges and opportunities. As we prepare to meet them, we do well to remember that there is no better legacy we can bequeath to future generations than a hemisphere of free and democratic nations, stretching from Alaska to Antarctica, prosperous and at peace. Through the cooperation of all those governments that are members of the inter-American system, may we continue to move forward in our efforts to realize this noble goal.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE BUSH, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim Saturday, April 14, 1990, as Pan American Day and the week of April 8 through April 14, 1990, as Pan American Week. I urge the Governors of the fifty States, the Governor of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and officials of other areas under the flag of the United States of America to honor these observances with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this sixth day of April, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and fourteenth.

GEORGE BUSH